

Exhibit No. 1Date 1/21/09Bill No. SJ14

Senate Joint Resolution 14
January 21, 2009
Presented by Ken McDonald
Senate State Administration Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Ken McDonald, Wildlife Division Administrator of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

SJ 14 seeks an interim study to examine the possibility of state agencies developing and maintaining joint laboratory facilities for testing related to wildlife, livestock, agriculture, and public health.

Wildlife disease monitoring and surveillance are an increasing component of the work done by FWP. Wildlife diseases currently being monitored by FWP include brucellosis, avian influenza, chronic wasting disease, big horn sheep herd health, blue tongue, West Nile virus, trichinosis, and others yet to come. Because of this, functional and effective laboratory capacity is critical. While FWP collects many different disease samples, FWP does not currently conduct a lot of lab sample analysis, but rather relies on the Department of Livestock diagnostic lab and other labs to assist FWP's disease monitoring and surveillance efforts.

Therefore, ensuring adequate and effective laboratory capacity is important to FWP and the state of Montana. If lab facilities of agencies were shared, there is the potential to increase effectiveness and synergistic relationships between agencies and agency staff.

An analysis of lab facilities, functions and needs, as called for in SJ14 makes sense and is just good business. Therefore, FWP stands in support of SJ14 and looks forward to the results of the interim study.